(b) whether it is also a fact that 90 percent of programmes, both on Government and private channels, are based on films and high classes of society; and

(c) if so, what steps Government are taking to change this situation?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING AND MINISTER OF STATE OF THE DEPARTMENT OF DISINVESTMENT (SHRI ARUN JAITLEY): (a) to (c) It has been intimated by Prasar Bharati that programmes with themes of interest to all cross-sections of society and depicting various facets of life are telecast by Doordarshan from its national network and various kendras. Programmes for rural audience are regularly telecast by the various kendras of Doordarshan. Programmes on science and those promoting scientific temper are also telecast at regular intervals. It has further been intimated by Prasar Bharati that films and film-based programmes account for only 10-12% of the total transmission time on Doordarshan.

Clearance of the Script of film "Water'

1134. SHRI SANJAY NIRUPAM: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) what is the role of his Ministry in clearance of the script of the films produced in the Country and to what extend Central Censor Board is involved in the exercise;

(b) whether his Ministry has recently cleared the script of the controversial film "water' being produced by a foreigner, if so, on what ground the script was cleared;

(c) whether it is mandatory for every producer to seek such clearance from his Ministry; and

(d) what is the stand of the Ministry about the production of the film as on date?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING AND MINISTER OF STATE OF THE DEPARTMENT OF DISINVESTMENT (SHRI ARUN JAITLEY): (a) No approval from the Government is required for films produced by Indians in the country. However, before release of any film for public exhibition in India, it is required to be certified by the Central Board of Film Certification, as per the provision of the Cinematograph (Certification) Act.

(b) to (d) Yes, Sir. The Ministry of Information and Broadcasting is the nodal Ministry for granting approval to proposals to shoot films in India, wholly or partly, by foreigners according to procedure prescribed in the Visa Manual brought out by the Ministry of External Affairs, Approval is given after due consultation with Ministry of Home Affairs in order to ensure acceptability of the proposal from the point of view of security.

While considering proposal, this Ministry keeps in view the concerns of integrity of the nation, friendly relations with other countries and communal harmony while adhering to the policy of creative freedom and the freedom of expression.

The proposal from M/s. Flagship International, Canada was also processed in accordance with the prescribed procedure and permission to shoot the films Water in India was given subject to certain laid down conditions. Subsequent to the completion of the film, it is required to be shown to a representative of the Government of India in India or abroad to ensure that it is not objectionable to the image of India, before it is exhibited anywhere in the world. For release of the film in India, it has to be certified for exhibition by the Central Board of Film Certification.

Shooting of the film Water in Varanasi was stopped for 15 days under Section 144 Cr. P.C. by the District Administration vide their order dated 7th February 2000 due to a law and order problem created by continued protests and demonstrations in the city.

The permission granted by this Ministry is also subject to the condition that shooting on locations is subject to permission being granted by the respective local authorities. As such the permission to shoot the film in Varanasi is subject to the District Administration's permission to do so.

Hiring the services of outside anchors

1135. DR. C. NARAYANA REDDY: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Doordarshan is hiring the services of outside anchors to host the panel discussions after the news bulletins;

(b) if so, who are those outside anchors;

(c) what is the remuneration paid to them; and